

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 079263

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ORIGIN OFA-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 COME-00 L-02 EB-07 SCA-01

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY

USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS STATE 079263

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, JA

SUBJECT: US SEIZURE OF JAPANESE LONGLINE VESSEL

GENEVA FOR AMBASSADOR CLINGAN, LOS DEL

1. JAPANESE LONGLINE VESSEL EIKYU MARU 33, 229.81 GRT, REGISTRY NO. HK1-287, OWNED BY EIKYU FISHING COMPANY, HOKKAIDO, WAS SEIZED APRIL 4, 2140 ZULU, FOR VIOLATION OF 16 USC 1081, FISHING IN US TERRITORIAL WATERS, BY USCG CUTTER MELLON.

2. VESSEL WAS ORIGINALLY SIGHTED APRIL 3, 2117 ZULU, BY USCG AIR PATROL 1 3/4 MILES OFF GREAT SITKIN ISLAND (EAST OF ADAK ISLAND), AT POSITION 52 DEGREES 7 MINUTES N, 176 DEGREES 12.5 MINUTES W, WITH LONGLINE GEAR IN WATER.
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PAGE 02 STATE 079263

THEREAFTER, HOT PURSUIT MAINTAINED BY AIRCRAFT AND SHIP

UNTIL SEIZED 24 HOURS LATER. UPON INITIAL SIGHTING, EIKYU MARU MOVED TO WATERS OUTSIDE OF 3 MILES, WHERE FISHING PERMITTED IN 9-MILE CONTIGUOUS FISHERY ZONE UNDER US/JAPAN BILATERAL AGREEMENT, BUT MADE NO FURTHER ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE.

3. USCGC MELLON ESCORTED EIKYU MARU TO RECOVER GEAR.

VESSEL NOW BEING ESCORTED BY MELLON TO KODIAK. ETA KODIAK APRIL 9 EVENING. UPON ARRIVAL KODIAK, MASTER OF EIKYU MARU EXPECTED TO BE FLOWN TO ANCHORAGE FOR ARRAIGNMENT IN US DISTRICT COURT. VESSEL WILL BE DETAINED IN KODIAK PENDING COURT DECISION.

4. FYI. JAPANESE EMBASSY HAS BEEN NOTIFIED OF SEIZURE. SHOULD POST BE QUERIED BY GOJ ON POSSIBLE PENALTIES, POST SHOULD CITE EBISU MARU 88 INCIDENT WHICH OCCURRED MARCH 1974. VESSEL WAS SEIZED FOR SIMILAR VIOLATION OF TERRITORIAL WATERS AND ASSESSED CRIMINAL AND CIVIL PENALTIES TOTALING DOLS 300,000. IN LIGHT OF THAT INCIDENT, WE ANTICIPATE COURT, WHICH ACTS INDEPENDENTLY, WILL ASSESS PENALTY OF SAME OR PERHAPS GREATER MAGNITUDE. POST IS ALSO REQUESTED TO EXPRESS DISMAY OVER INCIDENT ESPECIALLY FOLLOWING SO CLOSELY UPON SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF BILATERAL TALKS BETWEEN US AND JAPAN. KISSINGER

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